





P H E D R A,

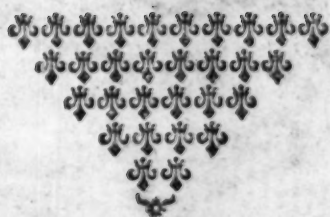
A

T R A G E D Y.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

O F

M. D E R A C I N E.



L O N D O N:

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P R E F A C E

OF THE

A U T H O R.

THE subject of the Tragedy of PHEDRA is taken from EURIPIDES; and, although I have struck into a different road from that Author, yet I have not omitted to enrich my piece with all that appeared striking and beautiful in his. I am not astonished that PHEDRA met with such great applause in the time of EURIPIDES, and that it has been so well received in mine, since it has all the qualities ARISTOTLE requires in the hero of a Tragedy, proper to excite compassion and terror. In fact, PHEDRA is neither entirely guilty, nor entirely innocent; fate and the wrath of the Gods have engaged her in an illegitimate passion, for which she feels the utmost horror. She uses every effort to surmount it, and prefers rather a voluntary death, than to declare her feelings to any one: and even when she is compelled to discover it, she speaks with confusion, which plainly shews that her crime is rather a punishment of the Gods, than the impulse of her own will.

I have also been careful to render her not so disagreeable as she appears in the tragedies of the ancients, where she accuses HIPPOLYTUS herself. I thought that such calumny was somewhat too low and too black to proceed from the mouth of a queen, who in other respects has such noble and virtuous sentiments. This meanness appeared to me more suitable to her servant, who, may be supposed to have more servile inclinations, and who nevertheless undertakes this false accusation only to save the life and honour of her mistress. PHEDRA only consents, because her agitation of mind makes
her

her desperate; but, in a short time after she returns with a design of justifying the innocence and declaring the virtue of the prince.

EURIPIDES and SENECA accuse HIPPOLYTUS of having violated his father's bed. *Vim. Corpus tulit*. But here he is not even supposed of having had any such design. I would spare THESEUS a confusion which would not have been agreeable to the audience.

I have remarked that the ancients, represented Hippolytus, as a philosopher entirely exempt from imperfection, which causes the death of this young prince to be received with more indignation than pity. I have thought it necessary not to make him so wholly perfect, that he might appear a little guilty to his father, without depriving him of that nobleness of soul with which he saves PHEDRA's honour, and suffers himself to be oppressed without accusing her. When I speak of his weakness, I would be understood to mean his passion for ARICIA, who is the daughter and sister of his father's mortal enemies.

This ARICIA is not a person of my own invention. VIRGIL speaks of the marriage of HIPPOLYTUS, and of his having a son by her after ÆSCULAPIUS had restored him to life. I have also read in some authors, that HIPPOLYTUS married and brought a young Athenian lady of noble birth, into Italy, who was called ARICIA, and who had given her name to a little town in that country.

I speak of the above authorities, because I have scrupulously followed the fable, and even the history of THESEUS as represented in PLUTARCH.

It is from this historian I gathered that the origin of the fable of THESEUS's descent into Hell to bring away PROSERPINE. Was, a voyage that prince made into Epirus towards the source of Acheron, to assist PIRITHOUS in the rape of the queen, but PIRITHOUS was killed and THESEUS detained as a prisoner.

Thus have I endeavoured to preserve the probability of the History, without losing any of the orna-
na-

P R E E A C E.

naments of the fable ; and the report of the death of THESEUS founded on this fabulous voyage, gives room for PHEDRA to make a declaration of her love, which becomes one of the principal causes of her misfortunes, and which she never would have done had she known the king had been alive.

On the whole, I dare not assert that this is the best of my Tragedies : I shall leave the decision of its value to judges and time ; all that I can assert is, that I have not yet written any one, where virtue is stronger held forth to view. The smallest faults are therein severely punished : the sole idea of a crime is looked upon with as much horror as the crime itself. Love is painted in its true colours : the passions are represented only to shew the disorders and evils they occasion, and vice is every where so strongly depicted, that its deformity is easily perceived and detected. This is properly the aim which every person who labours for the public should have in view ; and this is what our first tragic writers studied on every subject : their Theatre was a school where virtue was not less taught than in the schools of the philosophers.— Thus ARISTOTLE has laid down the rules for dramatic writing : and SOCRATES, the wisest among philosophers did not disdain to assist EURIPIDES in his Tragedies. It is to be wished that our modern productions were as instructive and useful as those of the ancients. It might possibly be a means of reconciling many persons who are justly celebrated for their virtue and piety to dramatic writing, who have in these latter times condemned it. They, no doubt, would judge more favourably of it, if authors would study as much to instruct as to divert, and if they closely followed the real intention of Tragedy.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THESEUS, Son of EGEUS King of ATHENS.

PHEDRA, Wife of THESEUS, Daughter of MINOS
and PASIPHÆ.

HIPPOLYTUS, Son of THESEUS and ANTIOPE Queen
of the AMAZONS.

ARICIA, Princess of the Blood royal of ATHENS.

OENONE, Nurse and Confident of PHEDRA.

THERAMENES, Governor of HIPPOLYTUS.

ISMENIA, Confident of ARICIA.

PANOPE, Attendant on PHEDRA.

GUARDS.

SCENE. TREZENIUM, a City of PELEPONESUS.

P H E D R A.

A C T I.

SCENE, TREZENIUM, a City of PELEPONESUS.

HIPPOLYTUS and THERAMENES.

HIPPOLYTUS.

MY resolution's fixed, Theramenes. I quit Trezenium
To seek a father, whose long and silent absence,
Leaves me ignorant of his fate.

THERAMENES.

And where, my lord, dost thou hope to find him?
To appease your fears, already have I crossed the seas
To seek the king at Corinth, and on the coasts of
Acheron;
Visited Elidus, and quitting Tenarus, bent my enquiring
Steps towards the seas, where Icarus met his fate.
On what new hope then build you your success:
In what happy clime thinkst thou to trace his footsteps?
Who even knows whether your royal father
Conceals his situation through a private motive?
And while we here, in vain, lament his absence,
Some new amour detains the hero.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Stop, Theramenes, and speak of Theseus with a due
respect.

Reclaim-

Reclaimed from juvenile errors, no ignoble obstacle
detains him:

Phedra has fix'd his heart, nor longer dreads a rival.
In seeking then a parent, I only obey the call of duty,
And quit a spot I no longer view with pleasure.

THERAMENES.

Ah! my lord, how long then have these peaceful
walls

Been irksome to you, which from your infancy you
have admired

And preferred to the pompous tumult of Athens and
the court.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Those happy days are over. Since the daughter of
Minos and
Pasiphaë visited our court, the sight of objects are re-
versed.

THERAMENES.

I understand you. Phedra, your dangerous step-mother
Causes this affliction: but her hate, formerly so strong
against you,

Is now totally effaced, or much abated: besides, my lord,
What canst thou dread from a dying woman? Phedra
daily consumes

With some secret ill; and weary of her life, impatient
Wishes for the stroke of death. Is it therefore possible
she can form

Designs against you.

HIPPOLYTUS.

'Tis not the enmity of Phedra that disturbs me. No,
Hippolytus

Flies from a more dangerous foe, the young Aricia,
the sole remains

Of the fatal blood which conspired against our family.

THERAMENES.

How! my lord, dost thou persecute thyself? the lovely
sister of the cruel

Pallantides, never assisted in the plots of her perfidious
brothers?

Why then this aversion to her innocence.

HIP-

HIPPOLYTUS.

If I hated her, I would not fly from her presence.

THERAMENES.

Your mysterious discourse makes me think
Your nature is changed. What then is become of this
haughty Hippolytus

—This implacable enemy to amorous laws, and the yoke
which

So often has subjected Theseus? Venus whose power
You disown'd, seems to justify your parent by punishing
your pride,

And by evincing you are not superior to the rest of
mortals

Compels you to offer incense at her shrine? You feel then
my lord,

The power of beauty?

HIPPOLYTUS.

And canst thou, my friend, who so long hast known,
The real sentiments of this proud, this stubborn heart,
ask me

To own such a shameful weakness? attached to me by a
sincere zeal, thou

Hast often recounted me the exploits of my father, and
when you depicted

The intrepid Hero, comforting mortals for the loss of
Alcides

The Centaurs worsted, Procrusta, Cercyon, Sciron and
Sinnis punished,

The bones of the Epidaurus giants scattered o'er the
plain, and

Crete reeking with the foaming blood of the destructive
Minotaur,

Thou knowst how my attentive soul has hung upon thy
voice,

And glowed at the recital. But when thou toldst me of
His less glorious feats, His proffered faith, Helen

Ravished from her parents, the lamentation

Of Peribeus, Ariadne breathing her complaints to the
obdurate rocks

And Phedra stole away, thou must remember with what
regret I heard

to

PAHEDRA

The tale and pressed thee to go no farther. Happy !
could I obliterate
From my mind, that ignoble part which sullies a father's
fame,
And shall I then in turn suffer myself to be thus fettered?
Shall I be thus humiliated? so much the more despicable
by my effeminate sighs,
As a long train of honours renders Theseus's failings
excusable.
What single monster have I subdu'd, to give me e'en a
shadow of erring
Like my father? Could I, even if this stubborn heart
gave way,
Chuse Aricia for my conqueror? No, an obstacle eter-
nally divides us.
My father by severe and rigorous laws
Forbids the nuptial tye, and with the sister would ex-
tinguish the name
Of those hated brothers who conspired against him. Shall
I, then
Shew a weak example of temerity? And embark my
youth.—

THERAMENES.

In vain, my lord, you strive to conceal the flame, and
oppose
The soft impressions of a guiltless love? What mighty
heroes has not Venus
Overcome, and think'st thou to withstand her power?
Away then with
This stubborn, this haughty boasting, and generously
own, what thy
Actions render but too apparent. Seldom now thou
drivest
With furious ardour the splendid car, or bend the stub-
born steed,
The forests now no longer re-echo back your cries, but
loaded with
A secret fire, you only breathe the soft amorous sigh.
No doubt, then
Can remain, You love, my lord, and consume with a
disorder

You

P H E D R A.

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You strive in vain to conceal. The charming Aricia.—

HIPPOLYTUS.

No more, Theramenes, I fly immediately in quest of Theseus.

THERAMENES.

But e'er you depart, will you not take leave of Phedra.

HIPPOLYTUS.

It is my intention, you may inform her of it!—But what New misfortune troubles her faithful Oenone.

S C E N E II.

Enter OENONE.

Alas! my lord, what trouble can equal mine.
The Queen still consumes with a secret grief
Sleep ne'er closes her watery eyes, and her silent sorrows
forbids
The approach of any one but me---but see she comes.

HIPPOLYTUS.

It is sufficient, I quit Terzenium
Nor let this hateful person appear before her.

[Exit.

S C E N E III.

PHEDRA and OENONE.

Stop, dear Oenone. My strength forsakes me,
My eyes grow dim and my trembling knees totter under
Their wretched burden. Alas! (*sits down*)

OENONE.

All powerful Gods! let our tears appease you.

PHEDRA.

How these vain and gaudy ornaments encumber me,
They may adorn the external part, but cannot compose
The afflicted mind! All, All disturbs and conspires to
wound your unhappy queen.

OENONE.

In vain, madam, we strive to please,
Your wishes wavering destroy each other:
At night impatient you wait th' approach of day,
And then unsatisfied long for the return of night.

PHEDRA.

I know how far my senses wander, The gods

Have

Have deprived me of them: oh! Oenone, blushes covers this

Face for the shameful grief which now afflicts me.

OENONE.

If then, madam, you must blush, blush for silence
Of your grief, which only aids its destructive fury;
Deaf to all our prayers and rebellious to our cares
Would you with furious rage,
Hastily and unpitied end your days?
Thrice has the shades of night spread o'er the heavens,
Without thy wonted rest: and thrice the sun has
Took his diurnal course, yet thou takest no
Nuriment to preserve your precious life.
What right have you to offend the gods who gave you
breath,

And grieve the king to whom you are bound in wedlock,
Or, by such fatal means to precipitate misfortunes on
Your wretched children. Think that the moment you are
Robbed of life, that moment re-establishes the haughty
enemy of you

And your blood; that son of an Amazon, that Hippolytus

P H E D R A S.

Oh! gracious powers.

OENONE.

My reproach affects you.

P H E D R A S.

Oh! that accursed name:

OENONE.

Your anger's just; I love to see you shudder at the
hateful name.

Live then: let love, let duty excite you. Live, and
suffer not

A Scythian's offspring, to command o'er the richest
blood of

Greece, and o'er the descendants of the gods. Do not
then delay

A moment to resolve; quickly repair your abated
strength, and shine

Again with renewed power.

P H E D R A.

I have too long prolonged a guilty life.

OENONE.

P H E D R A.

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OENONE.

How! with what remorse art thou torn?
What crime can have produced this great affliction?
Thy hands have never bathed in innocent blood, nor—

PHEDRA.

Thank heavens! my hands are untainted of any crime.
Would to God, my heart was as innocent as those.

OENONE.

What hideous project then hast thou conceived,
To stain thy heart?

PHEDRA.

I have said enough: spare me the rest;
And let me die, to avoid the black confession.

OENONE.

Die then, a victim to inhuman silence,
But seek another friend to close those eyes.
Altho' thy days appear but short,
Yet first shall Oenone seek the grave;
A thousand paths lead to the gates of death,
My grief will choose the shortest!
Cruel queen!
Remember, first at thy birth these arms received you,
Since when I never have deserted you: but left my
country,
My children, and all that was dear in nature to follow
you.
And will you not now trust me with this fatal secret
Which torments you?

PHEDRA.

Why, will thou press me farther?
Thy generous soul would shudder with horror
If I informed you.

OENONE.

What horror can equal that
Of seeing you expire?

PHEDRA.

When you are acquainted with my crime, and the
fate which
Awaits me, I shall die still more guilty.

OENONE, kneeling.

Madam, if e'er Oenone was dear to you, by those
tears,

Which

P H E D R A.

Which now fall from these aged eyes, by all that's
precious to thy sight,
Deliver my soul from this anxiety.

P H E D R A.
Since then thou wilt hear my guilt, rise; but heaven!
how shall

I speak it, or where shall I begin. O Venus! into what
errors did not thy

Hate and fatal rage plunge all my race!

O E N O N E.

Forget them, madam, and henceforth bury them in
eternal silence.

P H E D R A.

Ariadne, my sister too, struck by her cruel hand,
Fell a victim to her power.

O E N O N E.

What mortal distraction animates you?

P H E D R A.

Since Venus ordains, that I shall perish the last and
most miserable
Victim of my race, I consent.

O E N O N E.

Art thou in love, then?

P H E D R A.

I feel its utmost power.

O E N O N E.

For whom?

P H E D R A.

Prepare thyself to hear a load of horror. I love—
I tremble at the fatal name—I love—

O E N O N E.

Who?

P H E D R A.

Thou know'st the son of the Amazon,
The prince I so long have oppressed.

O E N O N E.

Hippolytus! gracious powers!

P H E D R A.

Thou hast named him.

O E N O N E.

OENONE.

Just heaven ! my blood freezes in my veins !
O despair ! O deplorable race ! O unfortunate coast,
Why did we ever approach thee ?

PHEDRA.

My misfortunes are more distant. Scarcely was I
Engaged by the laws of Hymen to Egeus's son,
When Athens presented me my
Haughty enemy. I saw him, blushed and felt a sud-
den flame
Rise in my soul : my sight forsook me, my faltering
tongue forgot
Its duty, and my trembling frame felt the sudden shock.
The power of Venus and the inevitable torments with
which she
Pursues our race, rushed quickly to my mind, and by
assiduous vows
I hoped to o'erturn them. For this intent I rais'd a
temple, to the goddess
Adorned it with the richest gifts, and offered victims at
her shrine.
In vain, I sought a remedy for my incurable love :
In vain, the altars smoked with my daily incense
offered
When I implored the protection of the goddess ;
I adored Hippolytus ; while he was continually in my
sight,
Even at the foot of the altar
I offered all my adoration to that God I dare not name.
My misery still encreased ! if I flew from him, the
Son again presented himself before me, in
The features of the father. At length, I resolved to
subdue
The fatal flame, I rous'd up all my courage to per-
secute the
Youth I loved. To accomplish this point
I affected all the chagrin of a cruel stepmother,
Pressed his exile, and by my eternal prayers, tore him
from the paternal breast.
My days then calmly flowed with innocence ;
Concealing my disquiets, I only obeyed the dictates

Of

Of my duty : but my cruel destiny still pursued me.
 Conducted hither by my royal consort,
 I again discovered the enemy to my rest :
 Immediately my wounds began to bleed
 Afresh ; and the subtle flame almost smothered
 By long absence, blazed once more with redoubled fury :
 I blushed in secret for my shameful passion ;
 Despised my life, and only wished to save my honour
 By a hasty death.—Thus Oenone have I
 Declared my shameful passion to thee, nor do I
 Regret it ; if thou in future cease from
 Thy generous attempts, to keep alight a vital spark
 Of fire, ready to extinguish.—How now Panope ?

S C E N E IV.

Enter PANOPE.

PANOPE.

The news I bring you, madam, I would fain conceal,
 Did not my duty enforce the dismal tidings.
 Death has robbed my royal master of that life
 His foes in vain essayed.

OENONE.

How ! what say'st thou, Panope ?

PANOPE.

That in vain to heaven ; our queen offers up her prayers
 For Theseus's return : since by vessels just arrived,
 Hippolytus has learnt his father's death.

OENONE.

Good heavens !

PANOPE.

For another master, Athens already seems divided in its
 Choice. Some loudly give their suffrages
 For Phedra's son, while others forgetting the laws
 Which bind the state, speak strongly for Hippolytus,
 —Nay, public report spread by an insolent faction,
 Calls Aricia to the throne—pardon, then madam,
 This abrupt intrusion ; my duty urged me to
 Warn you of your danger. Hippolytus already
 Is eager to depart, and 'tis feared will meet with
 Too great success, among a wavering people.

OENONE.

P H E D R A

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OENONE.

Enough, Panope, thy important counsel our
Queen will not neglect. [Exit Panope.]

S C E N E V.

PHEDRA and OENONE.

OENONE.

No longer, madam, would I press thee to drag on
A weary life; nay, would follow thee to the
Silent tomb, where every sorrow's hushed.
But this sudden change, this new calamity
Prescribes you other laws. The king's no more;
You, madam, must supply his place:
The child he has left, now claims all your care,
And demands your life; to whom, if thy rash hand
Had giv'n the fatal stroke, could he apply for shelter?
No longer would the
Maternal hand be ready to assuage his grief:—live then,
for now

No longer can reproach affect you with a treach'rous
Flame, since Theseus's death has left you free.
Hippolytus now no longer bears that formidable
Appearance, which so lately disturbed your mind;
Now you may meet his sight with
Guiltless eye—Perhaps already struck with your
Feigned aversion, he is become the seditious
Chief, and heads the revolt. Exercise then all
A woman's art, and bend him to your will.
Trezenium is his, and the laws ordains your son
Master of Minerva's favourite city.
Join therefore your united forces, against
Aricia's claim.

PHEDRA.

True, Oenone; it shall be done—thy counsel
Has relieved me. I will live then, if Hippolytus's
Love will re-animate this feeble frame.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

ARICIA and ISMENIA.

ARICIA.

What say'st thou, Ismenia? does Hippolytus
Request to see me; surely thou'rt mistaken?

C

ISMENIA.

ISMENIA.

Madam, this is the first effect of Theseus's Death, therefore prepare thyself, to find every heart By him perverted, turn'd towards you, and Aricia Mistress of the fate of Greece.

ARICIA.

This report of Theseus's death has some Foundation then,—but how was it occasioned?

ISMENIA.

Incredible reports are spread concerning it, And no doubt remains in any breast but thine: Athens mourns its loss, and Trezenium Appriz'd of the news, already acknowledges Hippolytus for its king, while Phedra Trembling for the fate of her son, seeks counsel Of her friends.

ARICIA.

And think'st thou, Ismenia, that Hippolytus, Blest with more humanity than his parent, will relieve My slavery? canst thou imagine that my misfortunes Touches him?

ISMENIA.

Indeed, I think so.

ARICIA.

Sure thou dost not know this insensible Hippolytus? On what frivolous hope canst thou have rais'd a thought, That he should pity Aricia's fate, and respect in me A sex he utterly contemns? Ah! Ismenia, hast thou Not observed, with what studious care he avoids our presence, And shuns the spot where we resort?

ISMENIA.

The flights he pays our sex, I'm well convinced of: But I have seen this haughty youth, in spite of all His pride, struck at the sight of Aricia;—have seen His eyes, with pleasure wandering o'er your charms, Refuse the dictates of his stubborn nature, which bid Him shun thee. Yes, I have seen Hippolytus; have read His mind; and though the name of lover, may offend

His haughty spirit, yet his eyes have declared his Thoughts, and spoke a milder language.

ARICIA.

ARICIA.

With what avidity, my heart attends to thy discourse,
Perhaps unfounded. O, Ismenia, thou
Partner of my hopes and fears, thinkst thou it
Credible, that this heart, the wretched sport of cruel
fate,

Can be impressed by Love? I, the sole remains of
Royal blood, who alone, saved from the rage of war,
Have seen my brothers lost in the flower of
Their youth, and the earth moistened with
The blood of Erecteus's offspring. Thou also know'st
The law severe Theseus has enacted since their death,
Which prescribes it death for any Greek to wed me,
Fearing lest the sister should re-animate the
Ashes of her brothers. Thou know'st with what disdain
I regarded this jealous attention to my fate,
How, ever averse to love, I thanked the unjust
And cruel Theseus for his proscription.—
But then, my eyes had not seen Hippolytus
Nor taught me love.—Not that alone
Allured by his person, his beauty, and
Other gifts which Nature gave him, I was
Captivated. No, I loved him for much nobler
Qualities, and praised in him, the virtues of his
Father, unstained with any of his crimes.
I loved, I own Ismenia, I loved him for
His noble pride, which disdained to bend beneath
The amorous yoke. I despise an easy conquest,
The heart which ever open, is assailed at
Every point successfully. But to bend the
Inflexible hero, to strike an obdurate heart,
And enchain the captive, who wonders at his fetters,
And vainly mutinies against a yoke which pleases him,
That Ismenia is my desire, my chief wish
Which prompts me on. To disarm Hercules, is
An inferior conquest to Hippolytus, and gives less
Glory to her who subdued him.—But,
My dear Ismenia, alas! how great is my
Imprudence! too many obstacles opposes my
Desire. Thou, perhaps will see my wishes

Humbled

Humbled, and I deploring that pride I now
So much admire.—Should Hippolytus
Love? But by what extremity of fortune
Could I have softened.—

ISMENIA.

He'll answer you in person, madam,
Hippolytus approaches.

S C E N E II.

HIPPOLYTUS, ARICIA, ISMENIA.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Madam, e'er I quit Trezenium,
I come to acquaint you of your fate.
My father is no more. The Gods have taken
The friend, companion and successor of Alcides.
I perceive your hate towards him, hears with regret
Titles which are his due. But one hope remains
To calm my grief, since 'tis in my power
To free you from your slavery. Therefore I
Revoke those laws, I long have mourned
The rigour of, you, madam, now are free
And have liberty to dispose of your heart,
And person, as your will directs.

ARICIA.

This goodness, generous prince embarrasses
And confounds me, and my thankful heart wants
Words to speak its gratitude

HIPPOLYTUS.

Athens, madam, divided in the choice of a successor,
Speaks of Aricia, Hippolytus and Phedra's son.

ARICIA.

Of me, my lord!

HIPPOLYTUS.

I know, the law which rejects me from the throne,
And willingly submit to the justice of it. Greece re-
proaches

Me with a foreign mother. But, if I had only
My brother for competitor, I should not
Hesitate a moment how to act. But now
A more legitimate rein curbs my audacity.
And I cede, or rather return what is your right,

A scepter

A scepter, which in a former age, your ancestors
 Received from that famous mortal, the earth conceiv'd,
 Egeus after sway'd it and Athens protected and
 Increased by Theseus, with joy acknowledged
 So generous a monarch, and in oblivion sunk
 Your unfortunate brothers.---Athens now
 Loudly calls for you within its walls, and enough
 Has mourn'd this long dispute, while her plains
 Have reeked with blood.

Trezenium is my province, Crete offers
 A rich retreat to Phedra's son. Athens
 Belongs to you alone, and requires your
 Presence; I go, therefore, madam, to accomplish
 This end and render you mistress of a faithful people.

ARICIA.

All I hear, astonishes and confounds me
 I almost fear, a dream deceives me.
 Am I awake? Can this be true?
 What God, my lord, what God reigns
 Within thy breast? Your glory already spread
 Abroad, loudly proclaims your fame?
 Is it not enough, my lord, that you do not
 Hate Aricia? and that you so long
 Have fenced your heart against any
 Enmity towards me?

HIPPOLYTUS.

I hate you, madam?
 However savage my nature may have been painted
 Think'st thou that some monster bore me?
 What savage manners, what obdurate hate
 Would not be assuaged in thy presence?
 And could I resist those powerful charms---

ARICIA.

How, my lord?

HIPPOLYTUS.

I find that reason must give way to the violence
 Of my passion. Since then, madam, I have broke silence
 I must go on, and inform you, of a secret
 My heart no longer can conceal.

You see before you, madam, an unfortunate prince,
 A me-

A memorable example of an inconsiderate pride.
 I who so strongly revolted against the power of love
 And have long insulted the fetters of its captives,
 At present bend under the common law.
 One single moment conquered my imprudent boldness,
 This proud, obdurate heart is at length enchained.
 For six months past, desperate I have struggled
 With this passion; but in vain. Your image
 Is perpetually before me. Where e'er I go
 Thou art ever in my sight. The light of the day and
 The darkness of the night, all place before my eyes
 The charms I would avoid. Hippolytus no longer is
 himself,

My bow, my spear, my car, all now disturb me,
 The forest now but echo back my sighs
 And my inactive steeds forget my voice.
 But this recital of so wild a flame,
 May only raise a blush, at so rude a conquest:
 But the offer of this stubborn, this untractable heart,
 Ought to receive a greater value. Think that I
 Now speak a language, hitherto I was a stranger of.
 Do not then reject my vows, though rude express,
 And ne'er would have been framed by Hippolytus,
 Had not Aricia's charms compelled them.

S C E N E III.

HIPPOLYTUS, ARICIA, THERAMENES, ISMENIA.

THERAMENES.

My lord, the queen approaches, and requests an audience.

HIPPOLYTUS.

With me, Theramenes?

THERAMENES.

Yes, with you, my lord.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Phedra desires to see me? What shall I say to her?
 What business can call her hither?

ARICIA.

My lord, you cannot refuse the queen's request,
 Tho' no doubt, thy mind still bears the impression

Of

PHEDRA.

Of her enmity. Yet to her tears some compassion
Is due?

HIPPOLYTUS.

And must I leave thee, then Aricia, ignorant
Of my fate and fearful least this tongue, unused
To the soft expressions of love, has offended
Those charms my heart adores.

ARICIA.

Go, prince, pursue your generous designs
Render Athens tributary to my power.
I thankfully accept this gift you offer me,
But this mighty empire, so great,
So glorious as it is, believe me, is not the
Richest offer you have made me, nor that
On which I set the greatest value.

[Exit Aricia.]

SCENE IV.

HIPPOLYTUS and THERAMENES.

HIPPOLYTUS.

My friend, are all things ready? But see, the queen,
Fly then, prepare in haste for our departure;
And return with utmost speed to rescue me
From a tedious interview.

SCENE V.

PHEDRA, HIPPOLYTUS and OENONE.

PHEDRA to OENONE.

Oh! Oenone, his sight deprives my words an utterance
And make my blood recede.

OENONE.

Remember, thy son, think, that his fate rests on you
alone.

PHEDRA.

My lord, we hear you soon will leave us,
Yet, e'er you quit Trezenium; permit a mother
To utter her complaints. My son is now deprived,
Of a father's succouring hand, and the day is not
Far distant when he'll be robbed of mine.
Already, numerous enemies attack

His

His infant years. To you, my lord, alone he can
 Look up for succour, to support his cause;
 But my mind troubled by a secret remorse,
 Presages that your ears are shut to
 My complaints, and I tremble lest your anger, justly
 Merited against a hateful mother, should pursue
 Her son.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Madam, such mean sentiments never entered the
 Breast of Hippolytus.

PHEDRA.

Yet should you despise me, I should not complain,
 In appearance cruel: thou thoughtst me bent
 On thy destruction; but thou couldst not penetrate
 The bottom of this heart. I exerted every art to raise
 Your enmity; I railed against you,
 In public and in private, used every means to force
 You from my sight; I even prohibited by an express law
 The mention of your name before me. Yet, for all this
 The offence was measured by the pain, I felt,
 Never woman, my lord, deserved your pity more than
 Phedra.

Nor is less deserving of your enmity.

HIPPOLYTUS.

I know, a mother is ever jealous of her childrens
 Rights before another's. Importunate suspicions are
 The too common fruit of a second marriage,
 Another Stepmother, might have taken more
 Umbrage at me, and excited still greater cruelties
 Against me.

PHEDRA.

Ah! my lord! I here declare, that the Gods
 Has excepted Phedra from this general law.
 A different anxiety troubles and afflicts me.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Madam, calm your afflictions. The king
 May still be living. The Gods in pity to our prayers,
 May grant his return. Neptune, will not in
 Vain be implored for my father's safety but will
 Protect him.

PHEDRA.

PHEDRA.

Oh! my lord, in vain we hope the Gods will
 Return Theseus to us; greedy Acheron never
 Quits his prey, nor suffers a mortal twice.
 To see the bounds of death. But, what am I saying?
 He is not dead, while Hippolytus lives
 Whene'er thou art before my eyes, I see,
 I talk to my royal husband and my throbbing heart—
 How strangely do I wander—my lord,
 Excuse my folly.

HIPPOLYTUS.

I see the prodigious effect of your love for Theseus
 Though dead, his image still is present to your eyes
 And your mind is ever employed on the thoughts of
 him.

PHEDRA.

True, prince, I languish, burn for Theseus,
 I love him, not such as he was
 Seen, when rioting in his dishonourable acts of love. But
 Faithful, haughty, wild, young and charming
 Attracting every heart towards him, such as our Gods
 are painted;
 Or, such as you now appear;
 That air, those eyes, that speech, and that
 Noble modesty which crimsons o'er your face. Such
 Theseus was
 When he crossed the seas from Crete,
 The object of Phedra's wishes.
 Where then was Hippolytus? Why did not the
 Grecian heroes fix their choice on thee?
 Why then, did not your years permit
 Thy presence on our coasts? Then, by you,
 The Cretan monster would have perished,
 In spite of every obstacle that opposed,
 My sister then would have armed thy hand
 With the fatal thread. My sister, did I say,
 No, I myself, Phedra, would have stept forth
 In that attempt. Love would then have formed
 The thought, and I would have led thee thro' the
 Dangerous labyrinth; with what care

D

Would

Would I have conducted thee along,
Nor trusted thy safety to a single thread. Companion
Of the danger, I would have led the way,
Phedra herself would have trod the labyrinth
And either lived, or died with her Hippolytus.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Gracious Gods! What do I hear? Madam,
Hast thou forgotten, Theseus, is my father.

PHEDRA.

And why thinkst thou prince, my memory
Has forsook me. Should I—

HIPPOLYTUS.

Pardon me, madam, I blush to own
That I wrongly accused thy innocence,
Shame will no longer suffer me in your presence.
And I go.——

PHEDRA.

Stop, cruel prince, thou hast too well observed
My meaning. Know then I love; I own it, am tor-
mented with an

Ardent flame. But think not in the moment that
I felt it, I weakly fed the poison. No,
I abhorred myself more than thou canst detest me
Wretched object of celestial vengeance.

The Gods are witnesses, the Gods, who in my breast
Have lighted up this fatal flame, those Gods
Who cruelly delight to seduce the heart
Of a feeble mortal. Recall then in thy mind
What lately has passed; to fly from thee was not all
I tried, I wanted to appear odious and inhuman to
thy sight,

And to resist the flame, I strove to gain thy hate.
But what avails all my ineffectual cares,
You hated me the more, as My love
Increased. Thy misfortunes lent thee new charms,
I languish'd and consumed in secret with my passion:
But, what do I say? This declaration,
This shameful declaration is not voluntary.
Trembling for my child, I came in his behalf.
But, alas, I could only speak to thee of my own
Hateful passion. Revenge thyself then.

(kneels.
Punish

Punish the wretch before you. Thou lovely son
Of Theseus, deliver the universe from this abandoned
monster.

Alas! Theseus's widow
Loves Hippolytus? Believe me, prince, the
Hideous wretch must not escape thee.
Here is this treacherous heart. Strike then,
And let thy hand expiate its offence.
Strike then. Or if thou think'st it unworthy
Of thy rage; if thy hate denies me
So mild a punishment; or, if thy hand fears to be
Polluted by this infamous blood,---
Give me thy sword, and let me thus---

(snatches his sword.)

OENONE, (seizing her hand.)

What mean you, madam! Just powers!
But see, Theramenes is nigh. Fly then,
And let none be witness of thy shameful weakness.

S C E N E VI.

HIPPOLYTUS, THERAMENES.

THERAMENES.

How, my lord, what means these signs of grief!

HIPPOLYTUS.

Theramenes, let us quit this place immediately.
My astonishment is great.
Phedra—But stop, let this horrible secret
Ever be buried in an eternal oblivion.

THERAMENES.

The sails, my lord, are ready bent, and
Wait your presence. But Athens, has
Already declared her choice. Her chiefs
Have had the voice of all her tribunes,
Your brother and Phedra has gained the day.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Phedra!

THERAMENES.

A herald charged with the will of Athens
Is come to present her with the reins of government,

Her

Her son is elected king.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Ye Gods, who knows her heart,
Is it then her virtue that you thus reward?

THERAMENES.

Besides a murmur runs, that the king is
Still alive, and has been seen in Epirus.
But I who have fought him there, know
Full well——

HIPPOLYTUS.

It does not matter, let us learn all we can
And leave no step neglected. Let us examine
This murmur, trace it to its source.
And whatever it may cost,
Let us place the sceptre in hands worthy
To sway it.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

PHEDRA. OENONE.

Ah! what avails these proffered honours;
They suit not me, but should be given
To one that more deserves them. And, oh! Oenone,
How can'st thou, thus importunate with me again
To bear the public mind, and strive to flatter this
Disorder'd mind? No, rather conceal me from
The sight of all the world, and bury me in
Eternal oblivion. My raging passions have
Divulged, what should never have escaped this
Tortured breast.—Heavens! with what surprize
He heard me, and by how many forced evasions
Strove to elude my complaints, as if he only
Wished a quick retreat.—How his blushes also
Redoubled my disgrace?—Why, Oenone, why
Didst thou, with officious care, prevent
My desperate attempt?—Alas! with what
Silent scorn he saw my rage; nor when the
Point was ready to pierce this vicious heart,
Did he with the least attempt strive to save me.

OENONE.

OENONE.

Thus, madam, your afflicted mind,
Ever intent on your unhappy fate, only
Keeps alive a flame you should extinguish.
Would it not better suit the blood of Minos,
To seek repose in nobler pursuits;
And, by accepting of this proffered crown,
Forget Hippolytus in the care of Athens.

PHEdra.

How can'st thou vainly think, that I, who cannot
Rule this erring mind, can ever rule a kingdom;
Or now, my senses have forsook their seat,
And I am sinking under a disgraceful yoke,
Can I with prudence govern.

OENONE.

Fly, then, madam, from this haughty youth.

PHEdra.

Would I had power.

OENONE.

You had power to enforce his banishment, and
Yet dare not avoid his fight.

PHEdra.

It is now too late. He knows my vicious mind.
The bounds of modesty are now passed over.
I have declared my shame to this haughty conqueror,
And a hope, in spite of this disgrace,
Still remains to flatter me. Thou, thyself, Oenone,
Recalled my drooping spirits; and when my soul
Was ready to depart, thou re-animated me with
Thy flattering advice.

OENONE.

Alas! what would I not do to save my royal
Mistress? But if ever offence has hurt thy mind,
Or raised thy anger, think of Hippolytus's scorn.
Can you forget the disdain with which he treated you?
Or with what cruelty the haughty prince
Saw you prostrate at his feet? Would that
Phedra saw him with Oenone's eyes! she'd condemn
This stubborn pride, and think him odious.

PHE-

PHEDRA.

That pride which thou dislik'st, he may wear off:
Bred in the forests, he is rude and unpolished,
Wild and hardened by savage laws,
Has never heard the word of love before.
Perhaps his wonder, caused his silence,
And my complaint was too rashly urged.

OENONE.

Some Barbarian bore him.

PHEDRA.

Scythian and Barbarian, both have loved.

OENONE.

But Hippolytus with a mortal hate
Disdains the sex.

PHEDRA.

Thy counsel, Oenone, is no longer seasonable;
And instead of calming, only aids my passion.
His heart is to love impenetrable; in vain we seek to
wound it.

Let us then find some part, in which he is accessible:
The charms of empire dazzle him: Athens
Is his aim. Already his sails are bent for
His departure.—Fly then, Oenone, fly and stop this
Ambitious youth: place the crown of Athens
Fore his eyes: tell him, that I, that Phedra will place
the sacred

Diadem on his head. My son, instructed
By him, will learn the art to rule. Hippolytus
Will be to him a second father, and Phedra and her son
Wholly in his power. Go, then, Oenone, tempt
Him by every method: thy words will
Meet with more success than mine. Use every
Art; nor let prayers, intreaties,
Sighs, nor tears, be wanting. Depict thy royal
Mistress languishing in death; nor hesitate
To take a suppliant form to gain thy purpose. Away
then, my only

Hope's in thee, and on thy success depends my future
Bliss or misery.

[Exit Oenone,

SCENE

P H E D R A.

32

S C E N E II.

P H E D R A, Solus.

O, implacable Venus! thou who see'st the disgrace
Of Phedra, am I sufficiently humbled?
Farther thy cruelty cannot extend; thy
Triumph's perfect. Cruel goddess, if you seek
A still greater glory, attack an enemy who is
More rebellious than thy present victim.
Hippolytus braves thy anger, nor ever
Humbly bent at thy altars. Thy name
Offends him. O goddess, then,
Revenge thyself, and make this youth,
This proud Hippolytus, feel thy power:
Let him love. But see, Oenone, quick returns.
Ah! I see he detests, nor accepts my offer.

S C E N E III.

O E N O N E.

Now, madam, you must stifle every thought of love,
And recall your former virtue. The king, whom
We thought dead, will soon appear.
Theseus is arrived, and the people press
With eager haste in crowds to see their
King. For while I fought Hippolytus
At your request, loud acclamations
Pierced the skies, for Theseus's return.

P H E D R A.

My husband lives! 'tis enough, Oenone,
I have made a disgraceful avowal
Of my love—He lives—I would know no farther.

O E N O N E.

How, madam?

P H E D R A.

I before informed you, but thou would'st
Not permit me: thy tears prevailed o'er my
Just remorse. This morning I had died
Lamented: but now, thy advice pursued, I die
Dishonoured.—Just heaven! what have I
This day done. My husband soon appears,
And with him Hippolytus. With what face can
I see Theseus, with the witness of my adulterous

Flame

Flame before me, and the big pang still throbbing
 At my heart, while the moistened tear
 Trickles from my eye!—Can'st thou form a
 Thought that Hippolytus will conceal from
 His father the flame with which I burn?
 Will he, whose honour is so strictly nice, suffer
 His father and his king to be betrayed?
 Or contain his horror for my weakness?
 Or if he should be secret.—I know my perfidy,

Oenone,

And am not of those hardened of my sex,
 Who can in tranquility and peace enjoy their crime,
 Nor suffer a blush to paint it on their face.
 I know my passion; and these walls, this arched
 Roof, seems ready to accuse me, and expect
 My consort, to acquaint him with my crime.
 Die then, and let one fault deliver me from
 Horrors innumerable. Is it so painful then
 To quit this life?—Death strikes no terror to
 The wretched mind; but the disgrace I leave
 Behind me is my only dread.—Heavens, what an
 Hideous portion for my child! The burthen
 Must oppress the offspring of mighty Jove,
 Who, branded with my infamy, must detest
 The name of Phedra.

OENONE.

Your fears are just. But why will Phedra
 Suffer her offspring to meet with such insult?
 Why expose them to the scoffings of a censorious
 World?—Hippolytus, happy at your expence,
 Views with pleasure your approaching end:
 And, when thou art passed the shades of death,
 What can Oenone answer your accuser;
 Confounded and disgraced at his reproaches, must
 I see him tamely enjoy his triumph?
 No, first let the flames consume me, e'er
 I live to see the day.—But say, my royal
 Mistress, say, is this haughty prince still
 Esteemed? Dost thou still love him? or
 In what light does he now appear?

PHE.

P H E D R A.

Not as the lovely youth, I once did love;
But as the hateful monster my revenge
Would crush.

O E N O N E.

Why then, madam, tamely yield the victory
To this stubborn prince? Rather boldly resolve;
And with firm audacity accuse him first, and
Render him guilty of the crime which you
Are threatened with.—Who can contradict you?
All, all conspires against him. His sword,
Which so late afflicted you, is fortunately in
Your possession; and his father, long prejudiced
Against him, thro' your perversions, will hear
Your accusation, ease your fear, and restore
Your tottering honour.

P H E D R A.

Ha! what, shall I oppress innocence, and
With malignant cruelty, stab the virtuous mind!

O E N O N E.

My zeal demands your silence only;
Like you, my trembling soul feels some remorse,
And shudders at the deed; nay, would brave a
Thousand deaths, rather than commit this act.
But, when thy life's in danger;—the mistress
Whom I love, when her fate depends on this
Remedy alone, I must not hesitate;
But boldly speak. Theseus, by my
Suspensions waked, will revenge thy cause;
And as a father never can obliterate,
A father's feelings, will only exile the
Stubborn prince. But, if so decreed,
And innocent blood must be shed,
Let it—What does your menaced
Honour not require? 'tis a treasure, so precious
In its nature, you must not hazard:
And, however the law of Conscience urges,
You must submit; sacrifice all then,
Even virtue for that gem.—But see, the king.

P H E D R A.

And Hippolytus with him.—Oh! I read
My ruin in his eyes. Act then, Oenone, as

E

Thy

Thy will directs; to thy advice I yield
My troubled mind, incapable of itself to guide.

S C E N E IV.

THESEUS, HIPPOLYTUS, PHEDRA, OENONE and
THERAMENES.

THESEUS,

Thanks to th'almighty powers, my
Wishes are compleat: since to these
Arms my Phedra——

PHEDRA.

Stop, Theseus

Do not profane thy fervent transports;—
I no longer merit those endearments;
You are wronged, basely wronged, and
In your absence, while fortune sported
With your fate; she has not forgotten
Your wretched Phedra.—Unworthy
Thy embraces: I can only in
Future shun that injured presence.

[Exit.

S C E N E V.

THESEUS, HIPPOLYTUS, and THERAMENES.

What means this strange reception? this
Sudden damp to all my ardor? speak,
Hippolytus, know'st thou the cause?

HIPPOLYTUS.

This mystery, my lord, Phedra can
Best explain.—But if my strenuous prayers
E'er met reception in thy breast, permit
Me, ne'er again to meet the queen; but let
Me unhappy quit the spot where she
Resides.

THESEUS.

How, Hippolytus, would you already
Quit your father?

HIPPOLYTUS.

Pardon me, my lord, 'tis not
My father that I willingly quit. But,
Remember sir, you left your consort
And Aricia under my protection:

The

The trust I've executed with fidelity.
 But, now, my father, my presence here
 No longer needful; and my inactive
 Youth passed 'midst the forests, has only
 Tried it's efforts on abject beasts.—Indulge
 Me then, my lord, and let my spear be dyed
 With richer blood.—Before my age,
 You had, with victorious arm, slain
 The mighty tyrant, and cleared the coasts
 From infesting pyrates. The traveller
 No longer feared their ravages, and
 Hercules, relying on your exploits
 Rested with pleasure from his weary toils.
 And shall I then, the offspring of so
 Glorious a sire; shall I, suffer my life
 To glide in indolence, unknown to fame,
 And basely sleep unhonour'd in the grave.
 No, my lord, indulge my prayer, and
 If some monster has escaped thy sword,
 Let me exert my power, and lay the spoils
 Respectfully before you.—Thus by great
 Actions, Hippolytus may prove to
 Future ages, that he was the son of Theseus.

THESEUS.

What do I hear? what horror spreads
 Around me. Just heavens! why didst
 Thou take me from my dreary prison?
 I had but one friend, and his imprudent passion
 Aimed at Epirus's queen, while I regretfully
 Served his amorous designs. But fate
 Opposed our wishes: the tyrant surpriz'd
 Me, defenceless and unarmed: Pyritheus
 Too, I saw him thrown by this
 Barbarian, to those cruel monsters, that
 Glutted on human blood; while I,
 Imprisoned in the dark and dreary cavern,
 Could only mourn his fate. The Gods
 At length took pity on my sufferings
 And I deceived my keeper: then with
 What pleasure I purged the world of
 The perfidious tyrant, and left him to

His

His monsters, a greedy prey.—And now
 When I thought to have embraced, all
 That the Gods have left me dear,
 I only meet with cold receptions;
 All fly me, and refuse my ardors,
 While, struck with the terror
 These thoughts inspire, I wish myself
 Once more a prisoner at Epirus.
 Tell me then, my son? Phedra complains
 Of some outrage. Who has deceived me?
 Why am I not revenged? Greece to
 Whom my arm so long was useful,
 Has she given refuge to some base
 Villain?—You answer not—speak?
 Is then my darling son, my Hippolytus,
 Is he conspired against me with my enemies?
 —But, let us farther search this hidden cause;
 Phedra, no doubt, will ease my troubled
 Soul, and point out the culprit and the crime. [Exit,

S C E N E VI.

HIPPOLYTUS and THERAMENES.

HIPPOLYTUS.

What means mysterious Phedra's words,
 They freeze my soul with horror: what,
 Will she accuse herself? Gods,
 How great will be my father's rage?
 What fatal poison, Love has shed o'er
 This royal mansion.—Myself, terrified
 With dark presages, know not which
 Way to turn.—But innocence has nought
 To fear.—Let me then haste, and in some
 Happy moment, move my father's pity;
 Open to him my love for Aricia, and with
 Intreaties gain his favour for what
 His power never can extinguish. [Exit,

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

THESEUS with a sword in his hand and OENONE.

Ah! What's this I hear,
 And does the traitor strive to abuse

The

The honour of his father? O fate!
 How ingloriously thou pursuest me!
 I know not where I go, nor where I am.
 —Traiterous rebel!—audacious villain!
 Oh, detestable thought!—and would the wretch
 To gain his infernal purpose, would he make
 Use of force, and basely arm his hand against
 A woman.—Ah! I know this sword too well,
 This sword with which I arm'd him for a
 Nobler end, he made the instrument of his incestuous
 love

Could not then the ties of blood constrain him!
 Why did Phedra, too, too merciful, neglect to
 Punish the temerarious monster, and by her silence
 Save him.

OENONE.

Phedra would not afflict the mind of Theseus:
 And blushing for the horrid intent of so mad
 A lover, Phedra would have no longer lived
 And her murderous hand, had nigh robbed her of life.
 I saw her—arm extended to give the fatal stroke
 And ran in haste to save her, and preserv'd
 Her for your love.

THESEUS.

Perfidious villain,
 I saw his colour change at my approach;
 I was surpriz'd at his cold, unwelcome
 Salute, and perceived his crime written in his looks.
 —But say, Oenone, is it yet known
 In Athens?

OENONE.

Think, my lord, of the queen:—alone
 She mourns this horrid crime.

THESEUS.

But tell me, Oenone, did this flame
 Break out in Trezenium?

OENONE.

I have told you all, nor can no longer stay;
 The queen with mortal grief oppress'd,
 Too long has been alone.—Permit
 Then my return, to calm her sorrows.

(Exit.)

S C E N E

P H E D R A
S C E N E II.

THESEUS and HIPPOLYTUS.

THESEUS.

Ah! here he comes. Gracious gods,
Who would not be deceived at those
Noble looks? Why on the adulterer's face
Does Virtue's sacred character reside?
Why are there not certain marks stamp'd
On the human visage, to denote the treacherous
Heart?

HIPPOLYTUS.

What fatal cloud hangs o'er my
Royal father's brow? Let me request
His confidence and—

THESEUS.

Wretch! monster! perfidious villain!
Darest thou then appear before me,
And expect my confidence, after thy
Incestuous love transported thee to
Stain thy father's bed!—Why is the thunder
Hush'd, why the wrath of Jove not
Sent with vengeance at thee!
—Matchless assurance!—consummate villain!
Here to remain, here in this very spot,
The witness of thy infamy, and not direct
Thy baneful steps to some unknown clime,
Some undiscovered land, where thy father's name
Has ne'er been known!—Hence then, traitor,
Fly, nor longer brave my anger.
'Tis enough for me, to endure the
Opprobrious thought of having such a son,
Withoutully the glory of my days,
With staining these hands in thy incestuous
Blood. Hence, then, I say, if thou would'st
Avoid a sudden death.—But, be cautious
Ne'er in future you are seen in my dominions.

And thou, O Neptune, thou (kneels.)
Hear my earnest pray'r; if e'er I cleared thy
Shores from infamous assassins, remember
That thou promised, as a reward for all
My labours, to grant the first request I

Should

Should ask thee.—In the long torments
Of a rigorous prison, I ne'er implored
Thy immortal aid: now, then, I invoke thee, **and let thy**
vengeance quick
Be sent to rid the world of this traiterous
Boy. Let his blood be shed to wash away
His villainous desires, his incestuous flame.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Ha! does Phedra then
Accuse Hippolytus of base desires?
Such unforeseen misfortunes, such excess
Of horror, which crouds on my astonished soul,
Denies my words their utterance.

THESEUS.

Traitor,
Did'st thou imagine, that Phedra,
In a shameful silence, would bury
Thy brutal insolence? Thy sword,
Thy sword, which in her hands you left,
Is sufficient to condemn thee.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Justly irritated by such a cruel
Falsity, my duty requires me to explain
The truth. My lord—But I will suppress
A recital which must affect you:
Therefore, condemn not the respect
Which enjoins me silence; for your
Repose and quiet, and without farther
Increasing your despair, examine
All my conduct, all my actions thro'
The small course of life I've run.
Think, my lord, some smaller crimes
Precede those of a blacker dye.—Who
E'er infringes a lawful boundary
Will in future violate the most sacred
Laws. Vice as well as virtue has its
Degrees; nor hast thou ever seen
Innocence suddenly plunge to extreme
Licentiousness. One day alone is not
Sufficient to turn the virtuous mortal
To the perfidious assassin, or incestuous

Villain,

P H E D R A.

Villain. Reared by a virtuous mother,
I have not sullied the blood from which
I sprang: Pitheus too, esteemed the wisest
Of human race, next taught me virtue.
But I will not place myself in
Too great a light; yet, if any merit fell
To my lot, let that disperse the hateful
Thought, that Hippolytus could wrong thee.
By virtue Hippolytus is known in Greece:
And the sun, which illumines this glorious
Sphere, is not more pure, than is this
Heart. No incestuous flame e'er—

THESEUS.

Yes, Coward,
'Tis that pride you boast of, which
Condemns thee. I see the odious
Principle of all thy actions.
Phedra alone charmed thy lascivious
Eyes; and for every other object, thy
Haughty soul disdain'd to feel an
Innocent and glorious passion.

HIPPOLYTUS.

No, my lord, this heart has not
Disdain'd to burn with a pure and
Real flame. Here at your feet
I confess my true offence.
I love, 'tis true, I love Aricia, her
Whom you forbid to wed. Yes, my lord,
The daughter of Pallantus has conquered
Your son, and my wounded soul, rebellious
To your orders, only sighs and burns for her.

THESEUS.

Thou lovest Aricia, heavens!—but stop—it
Cannot be, the artifice is too gross.
Justify thyself, you feign another crime.

HIPPOLYTUS.

For six months have I loved her, and yet
Strove to shun this attractive beauty.
—But, I see that nought can turn aside
Your anger, or relieve your error?—
By what sacred oath then shall I confirm

PHEDRA.

41

The truth of my assertions, and my innocence.—
May heaven, earth and all nature——

THESEUS.

The wicked ever have recourse to perjury;
Cease, then, no longer trouble me with
Thy importunate tale, if thy pretended
Virtue has no other prop.

HIPPOLYTUS.

It may appear pretended, and full of
Artifice, but Phedra in her heart must
Justify me from such crimes.

THESEUS.

How thy impudence excites my anger.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Since, then, thou wilt not hear me, I
Obey; but whither shall I go in exile,
Branded with a false and ignominious
Crime? What friend will pity me, when
Thou forsakest me.

THESEUS.

Go, seek for friends
Among those, whose wretched mind
Honours adultery, and applauds the
Incestuous villain. Traitors; who
Without law or honour, will deign
To protect such a wretch as thou.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Still, my lord, you speak to me of
Incest and adultery. I am silent. But
Remember, Phedra sprang from a
Blood, more replete with crimes
Than mine.

THESEUS.

How! dost thou then lose the
Respect that is due before me. Hence,
I say, fly traitor, nor wait the
Fatal effects of an enraged father.

[Exit Hippolytus.]

SCENE III.

THESEUS, Solus.

Wretched youth, thou goest to thy fate!

F

Neptune,

Neptune, terrible to the gods themselves,
 Will execute his promises to me.
 A revengeful god pursues thee ; thou
 Can'st not avoid him. I once did
 Love thee, and now I feel, in spite of
 All thy crimes, my heart is weeping for thee.
 But 'twas too much ; and never parent
 Was so abused. Just gods, who see'st
 The grief which now surrounds me,
 Why had I a son so guilty as Hippolytus !

S C E N E IV.

PHEDRA, THESEUS.

My lord, your anger reached my ears,
 And by terror urged I come, lest your
 Sudden rage, might commit a deed,
 Hereafter you might mourn.—Yet, Theseus
 Yet, if the fatal moment is not passed,
 Spare, oh, spare Hippolytus ; 'tis
 Phedra kneels, implores you to have
 Mercy ; oh, let not an eternal
 Grief o'erwhelm my soul with
 The accursed thought, of having been
 The cause of the paternal hand,
 Shedding it's offspring's blood,

THESEUS.

No, madam, as yet my hands were
 Never imbrued in my children's blood ;
 But the audacious rebel will not
 Escape from justice, an immortal
 Hand will strongly punish his atrocious
 Crime. Neptune will avenge the
 Wrongs of Theseus.

PHEDRA.

Neptune, will avenge,—Oh heavens !
 Has then your exasperated rage

THESEUS.

Fears't thou then, my prayers will
 Not be heard ! join thy supplications
 Unto mine ; paint his malignant
 Crime in the blackest colours :

Raise

Raise up all my rage, now too calm,
 And shower down vengeance on th'incestuous
 Villain.—But, yet you know not all
 His crimes; for, struck with the
 Thought of his attempt being known,
 The faithless villain burst into reproaches
 Against my Phedra, and with hardened
 Front, accuses you of uttering
 Nought but falsties. Aricia, too the
 Daughter of my mortal enemy; he declares,
 Has sole possession of his treach'rous heart.

PHEDRA.

How! my lord?

THESEUS.

This he but now declared,
 And with consummate art, braved it
 To my face; but his artifice is frivolous,
 I heed it not: once more
 I go, and at Neptune's altars offer up
 My reiterated prayers for his destruction. [Exit.

S C E N E V.

PHEDRA alone.

He's gone; what do I hear?
 The smothered flame rekindles in
 My breast, and burns with greater fury?
 Oh, heavens! to save the innocent
 Victim, from Oenone's arms I flew,
 But whither had my fury nearly
 Drove me, had he longer staid,
 I might have divulged the truth,
 And accused myself, to save Hippolytus.
 —But, why, this haughty youth feels
 Not for me; but plights his vows
 To Aricia. Oh! gracious powers,
 When this inexorable Hippolytus
 Armed his haughty looks against
 My proffered love, I thought his heart
 Ne'er had felt its shafts,
 But was proof 'gainst all my sex.
 But, alas! Aricia has bent this

Stubborn

Stubborn hero, and I, unhappy Phedra,
Remain the only object of his scorn.

S C E N E VI.

P H E D R A and O E N O N E.

P H E D R A.

Oh, Oenone, what have I heard?

O E N O N E.

Trembling, madam, I hither come,
And shrink with fear, lest your
Fatal intent has revealed the secret.

P H E D R A.

Oenone, could'st thou e'er have thought
I had a rival?

O E N O N E.

A rival, madam?

P H E D R A.

Yes, yes, he loves, Hippolytus,
My haughty foe, whom all my prayers,
My tears, and wailings, could not conquer.—
This monster, whom I ne'er approached
But with awe and dread, and tamely owned
Him as my conqueror; adores Aricia.

O E N O N E.

Aricia?

P H E D R A.

Ah, Aricia! Heavens! whither will
My sorrows drive me?—To what new
Torments am I yet reserved?—All my
Former fears, my love, my rage,
Remorse, and the unsupportable thought of
A refusal of my proffered bed, was
Only a feeble essay of what I now endure.
They love! Say, then, thou flatterer of my flame,
How have they escaped my sight?
Where, when, and how, did first their passion rise?
—You knew it all, yet let me be deceived;
Nor warned me of their stolen loves.
Hast thou not seen them speak, and breathe
Their amorous sighs together. Say, what
Shady groves, what gloomy woods, concealed

Their

Their hidden loves. Alas! they had it not,
 The well pleased sun approv'd their guiltness flame:
 Each unclouded day rose
 Clear and serene to bless their amorous wishes,
 While I, the shame of nature, fly the all-cheering
 Light, and hide myself in darkness, imploring
 Death to ease my anguish'd soul.

OENONE.

Ne'er heed their amorous flame,
 —They never more will meet.

P H E D R A.

Yet, they will ever love:
 Now, even now, ah! accursed thought,
 They brave my scorn, and in spite
 Of separation, offer up their vows to heaven,
 Ne'er to forget each other. I can no longer
 Bear the distressful thought. Hear me, Oenone,
 And pity my jealous fury.—Aricia dies,
 Her bleeding wounds shall appease my vengeance,
 Fly then, Oenone, rouse my husband's utmost rage,
 Against this odious fair, let not his
 Punishment be light, but joined with every
 Pang thy fury can inspire. I e'en Phedra,
 Will join thy prayers and implore the king,
 To extinguish the brother's crimes in their
 Sister's blood.

But whither does my reason stay?
 My jealousy drives me beyond its bounds!
 Theseus, whom I'd implore for vengeance,
 Is my husband faithful to my bed, while I
 Burn with an incestuous flame;—for whom?
 Alas, each thought only adds more horror.
 My crimes already too enormous, not
 Content with an hideous incest would
 Imbrue my hands in guiltless blood:
 —And yet, wretch that I am, I bear the sight
 Of that glorious sun from which I am descended.
 Where can I fly to hide myself from my
 God-like ancestors? if to the infernal shades I go,
 There my father holds the fatal urn.
 How would his trembling shade freeze

G

With

With horror, at his daughter's sight, and
 Hear me relate crimes, unknown to
 Hell itself.—What would'st thou say, my
 Father, at this horrid tale? I think, I see thee
 Now, motionless with surprize; the urn
 Falling from thy hand, and every nerve shuddering
 With horror at my crime. Oh, now I see thee
 Seeking some unknown, unheard of
 Punishment. Forgive, forgive thy child;
 'Twas not her will, but the impulsion of
 A powerful God, destroyed thy injur'd race:
 Alas! my wretched heart has never reap'd
 Its criminal desires; and I drag on a painful
 Life, with reiterated sighs and insupportable torments.

OENONE.

Throw off, madam, thy unjust fear,
 And with a more favourable eye look on your error.
 You love indeed; who can o'ercome their fate,
 Has the powerful God triumphed o'er you alone?
 No; mortals must submit to human weakness,
 And while you lament your too painful yoke,
 Remember that the Gods, who punish mortal crimes
 Have sometimes burnt with an incestuous flame.

PHEDRA.

Stop Oenone, to what new crime would'st thou advise me?
 Thou, who first led me on, would still conduct
 Me wretched to the end. Thou, who by
 Thy prayers, when duty bid me fly Hippolytus;
 Recalled me to my ruin, and
 Made me see him. Thou, who with impious
 Voice dare blacken his unspotted life?
 By some new scheme would add redoubled
 Torments to my affliction. Already, perhaps he
 Dies, and the sacrilegious prayer of an incensed
 Parent is heard.—I'll no longer hear thy
 Baneful counsels.—Hence, execrable monster,
 Hence and leave me to my deplorable and unhappy fate:
 May heaven with vengeance punish
 Thy atrocious deeds, and grant that thy
 Expected fate, may warn

Those

Those deceitful fiends, who with base
And wicked counsels cause the ruin of the
Wretched mind.

[Exit.

OENONE.

Oh, gracious powers! is this the reward
For all my friendship,—this the price
Of all my anxious cares to serve thee.
Have my unhappy crimes been wrought
For this alone; and have my tears, my prayers,
Nay even stratagems employed to save
Thy honour, been exerted only to merit
Rebukes, disdain and imprecations.

[Exit.

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

HIPPOLYTUS and ARICIA.

ARICIA.

Nay, my lord, when on the brink of
Danger thus you stand exposed, would you
Restrain your speech and leave your father
In a treacherous error? O cruel youth,
My streaming eyes have lost
Their power o'er your heart,—yet return to Theseus
And reveal the crime of Phedra.—Quit Aricia
And leave her to her sorrows; but e'er you go
Defend your honour, and force your parent
To revoke his oaths, and save thy precious life.
—'Tis not yet too late; why stand you
Thus with downcast look, and leave the
Cruel Phedra free to accuse you in your absence?

HIPPOLYTUS.

Alas, Aricia!

Can I then expose the violator of my father's bed,
And by a sincere recital of Phedra's shame,
Spread an ignoble blush o'er a parent's
Face! forbid it heaven. To you and the Gods alone
This odious mystery is divulged; from you my
Love would not conceal the crime; why then
Suspect thou art no longer dear to Hippolytus?
Forget then what thou hast heard, nor let

The

The horrible tale e'er again be told, but
 With firm reliance let us rest on the goodness
 Of the immortal power, whose equity will
 Justify my wrongs. Phedra cannot avoid
 The ignominy that hereafter waits her,
 Mean while, if e'er Hippolytus was dear
 To Aricia, let her quit this hateful bondage
 And fly with him from this impious spot,
 Where virtue breathes an envenomed air,
 And dare not shew her face in safety.
 Come, be the kind companion of my flight;
 Come haste with me to leave this fatal shore.
 Argos stretches out its arms, and Sparta calls us
 To seek for shelter in their peaceful coasts;
 Haste then, while our friends expectant wait,
 And all is ready for our quick departure.
 —Why does my fair one hesitate, when e'en
 Her interest should inspire her with courage.
 —Fear'st thou to take Hippolytus for thy guide?

ARICIA.

Alas! how blest would such an exile make me,
 United with Hippolytus, I could live
 Forgotten by the rest of mortals. But since fate denies
 Our union, I cannot go. Full well I know the
 Most rigid laws of honour would not blame
 My escaping from your father's hands. Flight
 Is permitted those who would escape the tyrant's yoke.
 —But, my lord, my own honour, Aricia's fame must
 Not be sullied with the reproach, of escaping with
 Hippolytus e'er hymen's torch——

HIPPOLYTUS.

Believe me, my Aricia, your honour is too
 Precious to Hippolytus, e'er to suffer reproach to
 Wound it. By a nobler motive
 Urged, I hither came. Quit then this hateful spot
 And fly with Hippolytus. The nuptial bonds of hymen
 Shall make Aricia mine, the priest expectant waits.
 Near to Trezenium's gates, and midst the tombs
 Those ancient sepulchres of my godlike ancestors.
 There stands a sacred temple, formidable to perjured
 Villains, where mortals dare not swear in vain.

There

There the perfidious wretch receives a sudden check
 And meets inevitable death.—The liar there must not
 Profane the sacred edifice with his treacherous tongue.
 —Thither, will Hippolytus lead his lovely fair,
 And by a solemn vow confirm his plighted faith.
 The powerful Gods shall witness all my sacred vows,
 And holy promises.

ARICIA.

With love and fear alternately possessed—But see
 The king approaches, fly then, my lord, a moment
 Will I remain behind, to conceal thy flight.
 Fly then, but leave me some faithful guide
 Who shall conduct me to the sacred temple.

[Exit Hippolytus.]

S C E N E II.

THESEUS, ARICIA.

THESEUS.

Ye righteous powers, restore my troubled mind
 And reveal this mystery which so sore disturbs me.
 Aricia, thou daughter of my mortal foe,
 Did not Hippolytus, this moment quit you.

ARICIA.

He did, my lord, and came to take a last farewell.

THESEUS.

Ah! thy beauty loathsome to these eyes,
 Has found the means to wound Hippolytus.

ARICIA.

My lord, I scorn a falsity, and boldly own 'tis true.
 Your honour'd son, inheriting nought of his father's
 Hate 'towards me, has never used me like a slave.

THESEUS.

I understand you, madam, he has sworn an
 Eternal love, and plighted his perjured vows.
 But, Aricia, think not his inconstant heart
 Is fixed, to others he has sworn as much,
 You know his crime, and can permit his baneful
 Words to sink into your heart.

ARICIA.

And, how can you, my lord, permit such
 Cruel-malasperions to blacken o'er a life so spotless?
 Know'st thou so little of his untainted soul?

Canst

Canst thou so weakly distinguish between vice and innocence?

From thy eye alone, the hateful cloud of slander
Prevents the sight of his brilliant virtues.
Oh! too credulous monarch, repent e'er 'tis too late,
Repent your murderous prayers. Tremble, my lord,
Tremble, lest thou hast not merited the hate of
Heaven yet so greatly, but it will grant thy wishes.
The wrath of the Almighty Gods, sometimes
Receives the victims that we offer them,
And their gifts often prove the rigorous
Punishment of our mortal crimes.

THESEUS.

In vain you varnish o'er his incestuous aim,
Your love, too strong for such an ungrateful villain,
Only serves to blind you from the truth.
But, madam, I do not rashly judge, I have
Credible, irreproachable proofs, have not
I seen the heartfelt tears stream from the eyes
Of the chaste, the innocent —

ARICIA.

Take care, my lord. Your invincible hands
Have freed mankind from innumerable monsters:
But not all are yet destroyed. ONE you still
Permit to live. That one conquered, Theseus
Will revere his son, and be great indeed.
Then have a care, for you stand on the precipice's brink,
Where the brittle earth
Is crumbling beneath your feet, and threatens you
With instant destruction. [Exit Aricia.

S C E N E III.

THESEUS.

What can she mean? but no wonder
My mortal foe should join to set me on the rack?
Hippolytus and she would disguise the crime?
It must be so? But yet, in spite of all my prayers,
Some plaintive voice pleads for him at my heart.
A secret compassion for his fate afflicts and wounds me.
—Let us again interrogate Oenone.

This

P H E D R A.

51

This mysterious crime must be better cleared.
—How now, Panope.

S C E N E IV.

PANOPE.

My lord, the queen, agitated by some
Inward grief, appears to meditate a rash design.
Despair strongly painted on her face,
The hand of death is already on her.
Oenone too, whom late the queen discharged,
Has plunged into the sea.

THESEUS.

What do I hear?

PANOPE.

Her rashness has not calmed the mind of Phedra.
Trouble and despair increases on her. Sometimes
To assuage her secret grief, she clasps her children
To her breast, while the tears in torrents flow.
Then again, she drives them from her, with
The utmost horror, and wild with despair
No longer knows her attendants. Thrice has
She written, then sudden changing her mind,
Thrice has she torn the unfinished letter.

THESEUS.

Heavens! what can all this mean?
Oenone dead, and Phedra ready to expire?
Ah! I fear I have been too hasty.
Fly! call back my son, e'er my prayers are granted.
Let him defend himself against his accusers;
And thou, O Neptune! do not too hastily accomplish,
Thy fatal favours: I perhaps, have given too
Easy faith to Oenone's words, and rashly
Lifted my murdering hands, against my son.
Oh Hippolytus! what torture wrings thy
Father's breast.

S C E N E VI.

THESEUS and THERAMENES,

THESEUS.

Theramenes, where is my son? where hast
Thou left Hippolytus? to thy virtuous care,
I entrusted him in his earliest years;

And

And—but what—speak—why flow those tears ?
—I dread thy answer,—yet speak,
Thou good old man, where is Hippolytus ?

Theramenes.

Alas ! he is no more—these eyes, these streaming
Eyes saw Hippolytus perish.

Theseus.

The Gods then granted my request.
'Twas, O 'twas Theseus, his father killed him.
—Yet why, ye powerful Gods, why so quick
To grant my prayers ?---But tell me, Theramenes,
What sudden bolt destroyed him.

Theramenes.

Scarce had we left Trezenium's gates,
But mounted in his car, while his silent
Attendants around him ranged
Imitated his silence and were dumb with grief.
Pensive he bent his course towards Mycenæ,
His courfers reins neglected lay,
While his folded arms clasped his sorrowful breast ;
His proud, his stately steeds, who before were
Full of vigour and chearfully obeyed their master's voice,
With heavy look and heads bent down to earth
Seemed to feel their master's woe.
In this solemnity proceeding ; a horrid
Cry issued from the waves, the air was troubled,
And from the bosom of the earth, another voice returned
The formidable sound. Struck with amaze,
Our blood congealed within our veins,
And the attentive steeds bristled up their hairs,
Affrighted at the uncommon noise ;
Presently, from the waves with hideous
Bubblings reared a humid mountain,
Which approached towards us,
Bursting in our sight ; a furious monster
Issued from the foaming surge, large
Branching horns sprang from his hideous front ;
His body covered o'er with jaundiced scales,
While the earth trembled with his
Hideous roaring. Heaven, with horror saw
The monster, the earth was moved, the air infected
At its sight, and the wave which brought it to the

Shore

Shore returned affrighted back. All accept
 Hippolytus flew to a neighbouring temple. But
 Your son stopt his affrighted steeds, and seizing
 His unerring spear, darted it at the monster.
 Raging with the wound, he roaring fell before
 The horses feet, opened its fiery mouth and
 Enveloped them in smoke in
 Fire and in blood. Enraged, affrighted at this scene
 And deaf to Hippolytus's cries, they no longer obeyed
 The bridle's check, but hurried impetuous on,
 O'er rocks where their terror carried them.

The car, no longer able to support the shock,
 Broke in shivers, and Hippolytus entangled
 In the reins.---I saw him, excuse my grief
 My lord.---I saw your unfortunate son
 Dragged by the steeds, his hands so long had fed
 Along the craggy precipice, his body all
 O'er blood, exhibited to our view, a terrible
 Appearance. At length they stopt, and I hastened
 To the fatal spot, the rocks were tintured with
 His blood, his hair, and all his body dropping
 With the gore,—he heard my voice, and reaching
 Out his hand, his eyes half closed by death,
 He faintly said:

“Heaven! Theramenes has taken away a life,
 Thou knowst was guiltless,
 Let Aricia be your future care, guard her from ev'ry ill;
 And oh! my friend, if e'er my father should be undeceived,
 Tell him the misfortune of his wronged son,
 That's all I ask, with this dying breath, to appease
 My plaintive shade, he treats his captive not severe,
 And restores her.”——He could say
 No more, the flattering accent hung upon his tongue,
 And of the expiring hero, only a mangled corps remained.

THESEUS.

O, my son; thou dearest hope of my aged years!
 O, inexorable gods! Ye have indeed too punctually
 Heard an enraged parent.

THERAMENES.

No sooner was Hippolytus expired, e'er
 Aricia came, fled from your anger, to

H

Accept

Accept your son as a faithful spouse;
 But, as she nearer came: the red and smoking grass
 Struck her with surprize; but when she saw
 (Good Heavens! what an object for a bride:)
 Hippolytus extended, pale and breathless.
 Who can paint her looks? awhile she
 Doubted it was not the hero she adored;
 Called for Hippolytus, with anxious voice,
 'Till at length, too certain of his death,
 She accused the gods, and throwing herself
 On the mangled body, clasp'd it to her breast,
 Then with agony oppress'd, she raved, tore
 Her dishivelled hair, and called aloud for
 Vengeance on the head of Phedra; till at
 Last o'ercome, and her spirits sunk, she fell
 A lifeless corps by Hippolytus's side.
 This, Sir, is the fatal catastrophe—but see
 His mortal enemy approaches.

SCENE THE LAST.

THESEUS, PHEDRA, THERAMENES, PANOPE
 and GUARDS.

THESEUS.

Now, Madam, your victory is compleat, my son
 Is dead. Oh! how my souls alarmed with doubt, and
 suspicion,
 Pleads his exile within my heart. Accept your victim,
 Phedra, and whether his death was just or criminal,
 Never! Oh never! let me be undeceived, since
 You accused him of the guilt; his crime alone
 Will furnish me with cause sufficient for my tears,
 Without more enquiries which might
 Only heap greater sorrows on my head;
 Leave me to deplore his fate, and avoid his
 Bleeding image, far from these hateful shores.
 —But whither shall I fly—persecuted with the
 Dreadful thought, no place can obliterate him
 From my mind.—Besides all nature seems
 In arms against my cruelty.—My fame, the
 Honours I have gained, conspires to punish me.
 Had I been less known, I might have concealed
 My disgrace the better.—If he had been guilty should I—

Phedra

P H E D R A.

Guilty! alas, whither has my passion drove me?
 No, Theseus, 'tis time to clear this horrid mystery.
 Your son was innocent, and has been basely wrong'd.

T H E S E U S.

Ah! say'st thou so,
 Then am I compleatly wretched.—Think'st thou
 Monster! thou, on whose virtue I relied, and for thee
 Prayed the gods to hurt their vengeance on him,
 Think'st thou to avoid.—

P H E D R A.

My time is precious,—hear me, Theseus,
 'Twas me, your Phedra, whom you deem'd so virtuous,
 That with profane, and incestuous eye, looked on
 Hippolytus;
 Heaven in my breast raised this fatal flame,
 The detestable Oenone was the cause of the rest.
 She, fearing lest Hippolytus should declare to thee,
 My shame, which he detested: abused my confidence
 And flattered a woman's weakness. She
 Accused him of the crime, and raised your indignation.
 —But Oenone has met her fate, and e'er now mine would
 Have been ended; had not my remorse urged me,
 To explain this horrid secret.—Ah! I feel the wish'd
 For moment is at hand—the baneful poison
 Trickles thro' my veins, and spreads an unknown
 Coldness o'er my heart—before my eyes a cloud
 With dimness hangs, and gives back to the Sun
 That purity which they sullied.—Oh! Theseus,
 If e'er I merited thy love, forgive thy.— [DIES.

P A N O P E.

She expires!

T H E S E U S.

And let the remembrance of so dark a crime,
 Expire with her. Alas! Crimes too late revealed.
 But let us hence, and with the blood of my
 Unfortunate son, mingle my flowing tears:
 Let us endeavour to expiate this horrid vow,
 By rendering his corpse the honours which it merits.
 From my example, hence let monarchs know,
 What dread effects from vice and rashness flow.

F I N I S.